

Collaborative effort minimises loss of water supply

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Associated British Ports (ABP) own and operate over 20 ports in the UK, managing around 25% of the UK's sea-borne trade and over £150 billion of UK trade annually. The company has four sites with Wave as the retailer, at Immingham, Grimsby, Lowestoft, and Ipswich. As well as port operation, their activities include transport, haulage, port maintenance, land management and marine consultancy, among many others. ABP have been a customer of Wave since the opening of the water retail market in 2017.

A tricky situation

ABP got in touch to let us know they had a major leak on their private infrastructure, which takes water from their boreholes and allocates it to where it's needed on site. The water is normally used to supply the Humber International Terminal so without it, there'd be major disruption to some of the port's vital activities. It was crucial that Wave took immediate action to prevent any further setbacks.

Rising to the challenge

The leak was next to a busy port road and had the added safety challenges of being near two high-voltage cables, so it was likely that repairs would take some time to complete. After looking at the affected area on a site plan, Wave worked with the port to review their contingency plan which involved reinstating an old, isolated supply point and providing bottled drinking water for staff.

Because their Account Manager knew the risks of reinstating an old supply point, which include potential issues with water quality, availability of supply and the generation of transient waves, we contacted their Wholesaler, Anglian Water, to arrange an immediate meeting to discuss the solution in more detail.

A collaborative effort

As a result of the collaboration and regular communication, ABP were able to successfully execute their proposed contingency plan, and ensure water was supplied to the site. This meant the port was able to continue operating throughout the repair, while still maintaining health and safety protocol and causing minimum disruption to the UK economy.

In association with the Wholesaler, Wave also started to develop a Site Specific Arrangement for ABP which sets out their emergency protocols and clear communication pathways for any emergency scenarios in the future.

Anthony Murray, Utilities Efficiency Manager for ABP, said: "We were extremely impressed at the speed at which the matter was dealt with by Wave and Anglian, and how quickly engineers attended site to help confirm it was safe to use the supply. I personally also appreciated the call out the water wasn't safe in terms of drinking water. The fact all risks and issues were considered and communicated immediately was very helpful, and allowed us to implement contingency plans to mitigate these issues and ultimately minimise the disruption to port operations. It definitely gives us the confidence that, should a similar issue arise in the future, we're able to rely on our partners at Wave and Anglian to resolve issues quickly and safely."

Rob Barker, Industrial Customer Manager for Wave, said: "Thanks to the collaborative effort between customer, Wholesaler and Wave, ABP were able to maintain water supply to their site and processes which are vital to the local and national economy. They were able to do this safely and with all the necessary permissions. The expertise and site knowledge of all parties contributed to a successful outcome."